

FCSG Statement on Mid-Cycle Budget Offers for CAP Implementation

Statement updated on May 24, 2015

The Fort Collins Sustainability Group (FCSG) has been tracking City Council's Six Month Agenda Planning Calendar closely since the April elections, and was pleased to see recently that Climate Action Plan Implementation is now scheduled as a work session item on September 8th. The resolution passed in March approving the 2015 Climate Action Plan (CAP) calls for City staff to develop a 2020 Climate Action Implementation Plan to "identify prioritized actions and associated near-term budget requests" needed to meet our greenhouse gas emissions reduction goal for 2020, and to put us on a trajectory to meet the 2030 goal. So the discussion scheduled for September 8th will be an important "next step" toward achieving the City's ambitious climate goals.

There is, however, a small step that Council can take before September 8th that would be helpful in assuring that we meet the 2020 goal. That step is to direct City staff now to prepare several mid-cycle budget offers focused on CAP implementation. Mid-cycle budget offers are due in early July, and will first be considered by the entire Council during the work session scheduled for September 22nd.

We believe that budget offers in the following three areas would keep the City on track to meet its short term and longer term climate goals:

1. **Community Engagement:** This would consist of efforts to let Fort Collins residents know about the City's new goals, how achieving those goals will benefit the community, and how they can support those goals.
2. **Financing mechanisms:** This would consist of a study and perhaps pilot programs addressing how the substantial long-term savings resulting from implementing the CAP can be brought forward to pay for making the necessary short term investments.
3. **Additional ClimateWise 2.0 funding:** ClimateWise has been a very successful City program in reducing greenhouse gas emissions from businesses, institutions, and industry since 1999. Improving energy efficiency and conservation will be critical to achieving the 2020 goal, and ClimateWise 2.0 should be an important tool for accomplishing this.

We encourage Council to ask the City Manager to be sure that mid-cycle budget offers are developed in these three areas, and perhaps others as staff deems appropriate. This action would be helpful to ensure that the City is successful in achieving the ambitious climate goals that were unanimously supported by council and have garnered both the City and Council members national and international attention since this past March.

Update: On Tuesday, May 19th, three Council members expressed an interest in having mid-cycle budget offers supporting the CAP brought forward, and the City Manager stated that staff would do so.